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**Inventory for
Manuscript Collection
MS – 634**

Captain William M. Patterson Papers

**1861-1898
Bulk dates: 1876-1891**

by
Elisabeth Meier
September 2018

5 folders
0.15 linear feet
Accession no. 78.113.4 and 86.85.29.1

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Abstract

Patterson, William Manson

Papers, 1861-1898

Bulk dates: 1876-1891

Size: 5 folders

Captain from North Edgecomb, Maine

This collection contains accounts, bills, receipts, and related documents from the schooner *Jefferson Borden* (later, *Arcana*) under Captain William M. Patterson. The *Jefferson Borden* sailed in the coastal trade from Maine to New Orleans and made frequent trips to the West Indies and England. The collection also contains accounts and receipts from Patterson's other maritime investments and from his farm and house in North Edgecomb, Maine. There are a few letters, but almost no personal material.

Part gift of Charles E. Burden, part museum purchase from William Hill, Gosshill Books. MS-634. Accession #78.113.4 and 86.85.29.1.

Finding aid (folder level control) in repository.

Added entries—persons:

Patterson, William Manson

Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels):

Arcana (Schooner)

Jefferson Borden (Schooner)

Added entries—key terms:

Accounts, household

Agriculture

Coasters (ships)

Merchant mariners

Schooners

Ship captains

Ships – Maintenance and repair

Wages

West Indies trade

Acquisition

This bulk collection was purchased from William Hill of Gosshill Books in 1978. It was part of a larger purchase that included the Captain Atwood B. Norton Papers (MS-42), the log-book and slop accounts of the schooner *M.V.B. Chase* (SM 52/1-2), Schooner *Elizabeth Howard* Papers (MS-635), Captain Joseph Purington Account Book (part of MS-88), the Joseph Cargill papers (MS-413), Joseph Dodge papers (MS-636), and the Orrissa Willmarth Foster Sheppard papers (MS-637).

The remainder of the collection was donated by Charles E. Burden in 1986. This group included all the charter parties and most of the bills of lading in the collection, but otherwise contained much of the same material as the first acquisition. There were also a few papers from

Joseph Cargill and Orissa Sheppard in this gift, which have been filed with their respective collections.

Restrictions

There are no restrictions on this collection.

Physical Condition

The papers are in good condition apart from usual wear and tear.

Related Materials

The papers of Wiscasset historian William D. Patterson at Maine Historical Society include information about his relatives, William Manson Patterson and Emma J. Smith Patterson: ships' papers of schooners *Ida Lilly*, *Jefferson Borden*, and *Hunter*, and other vessels, including correspondence of Captain William Manson Patterson, as well as transcriptions of Emma Patterson's diary.

Historical Note

William M. Patterson was born in 1834 in Edgecomb, Maine. He was the son of William Patterson, a farmer in Edgecomb, and Sarah (Trask) Patterson. He went to sea as a teenager and, by 1868, was in command of the ship *Ida Lilly* of Richmond, Maine. In 1872, Patterson purchased a quarter share of the schooner *Jefferson Borden*, which had recently been salvaged after running aground on the Florida coast, and sailed as her captain for most of the next thirteen years. Patterson used the *Jefferson Borden* in the West Indies sugar trade, the cotton trade between New Orleans and Europe, the southern lumber trade, and general coastwise freighting.

In 1887, Patterson purchased a controlling share in the bark *Nannie T. Bell*, built in Greenport, Long Island. He was aboard as the captain when the *Bell* was lost on a Caribbean reef in December, 1888. All hands survived after a short voyage in the bark's boats.

William M. Patterson married Emma J. Smith (1841-1902) of Bangor in 1866. The couple apparently had no children. Emma frequently accompanied her husband to sea. When William retired in the early 1890s, they settled down on a farm in North Edgecomb.

The *Jefferson Borden* (three-mast schooner) was built in Kennebunk, Maine, in 1867. She was purchased by a group of investors in Fall River, Massachusetts, and sailed from that port. In October, 1870, the *Jefferson Borden* ran ashore on the Florida coast in a hurricane. The hulk was sold to salvagers from the Florida Keys, who refloated and repaired the vessel and sold her to a Boston merchant, G.G. Towne, and Captain William Patterson.

In 1875, the *Jefferson Borden* was the scene of a determined mutiny, which was sensationalized by papers across America. On a long and leaky voyage from New Orleans to Liverpool, the crew threw both mates overboard and spent the next two days engaged in a running battle with the captain and the steward. Eventually, the wounded crew surrendered, and Patterson brought the *Borden* into Liverpool with only the help of his steward, two seamen who had stayed neutral, and a sailor begged from a passing vessel.

In November of 1883, Patterson changed the *Jefferson Borden's* name to *Arcana*, perhaps to escape the schooner's notoriety in order to sell it. Shortly thereafter, a Captain Holmes took

command. The *Arcana* ran aground in a Bay of Fundy snowstorm in January, 1885, and was lost with all hands.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains accounts, bills, and other documents from Captain William Patterson, including charter parties and other material from his time aboard the schooner *Jefferson Borden*, later renamed *Arcana*. There are a few letters, mostly related to accounts or finances, and little personal material.

The material from the *Jefferson Borden/Arcana* deals with the schooner's routine business in port, including receipts from provisioning, crew wages, maintenance and repair, and, less frequently, bills of lading or receipts for cargo handling. It also contains a selection of charter parties and bills of lading from across the schooner's career. Though these cover a wide variety of the vessel's business, particularly in American ports, there is little to nothing about mutiny, shipwreck, or other events at sea.

The remaining folders, titled 'general accounts,' contain material that is not clearly linked to any of Patterson's commands. Some material does pertain to his interests in other vessels, business in port, or other maritime affairs, so these folders are worth examining in concert with the vessel files. The general accounts also contain bills and receipts related to Patterson's home and farm in Edgecomb.

Box and Folder List

Box	Folder
1	1 William Patterson, general accounts, 1861-1889
	2 General accounts, 1890-1898
	3 <i>Jefferson Borden</i> (three-mast schooner), accounts, 1872-1883 and undated
	4 <i>Jefferson Borden</i> (three-mast schooner), charter parties, 1874-1883
	5 <i>Jefferson Borden</i> (three-mast schooner), bills of lading, 1874-1882
	6 <i>Arcana</i> (three-mast schooner, ex- <i>Jefferson Borden</i>), accounts, 1883-1884 and undated
	7 Crew accounts, <i>Jefferson Borden</i> and <i>Arcana</i> , 1880-1884 and undated